

Message Text

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41

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ADP-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03

RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 AID-20 IO-12 DPW-01 /137 W

----- 068888

O R 151200 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1279

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

USIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL UDORN

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

USMISSION USUN

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

CINCPAC

CINCPACFLT

CGFMFPAC

CGUSARSUPTHAI

CNO

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COMNAVINTCOM
COMSEVENTHFLT
COMUSMACTHAI
7/13 AF
7 TH PSYOPS
COMUSSAG
III MAF

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 PHNOM PENH 4719

JOINT EMBASSY/ DAO

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINTS, PINT, PFOR, MOPS, CB
SUBJ: KHMER REPORT - MAY 15, 1973.

GENERAL

1. ANOTHER WEEK OF POLITICAL BARGAINING HAS APPARENTLY RESULTED IN THE IMMINENT FORMATION OF A GOVERNMENT WITH IN TAM AS PRIME MINISTER, ALTHOUGH THE NEW CABINET HAS NOT YET BEEN OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCED. SIHANOUK IS ON THE MOVE AGAIN, THIS TIME IN AFRICA, WHERE HE HAS VISITED SENEGAL AND GUINEA. MILITARY ACTIVITY WAS LOWER IN INTENSITY. SOME PROGRESS WAS MADE BY FANK IN THE TAKEO AREA, BUT THE SITUATIONS IN THE MEKONG CORRIDOR AND ON ROUTE 5 ARE ESSENTIALLY UNCHANGED.

POLITICAL (INTERNAL)

2. AFTER A WEEK OF DISCUSSIONS AND FOLLOWING REPORTS OF AN ARRANGEMENT WHICH WOULD HAVE DISPENSED ENTIRELY WITH THE POST OF PRIME MINISTER, THE HIGH POLITICAL COUNCIL AGREED ON MAY 11 TO CHARGE IN TAM WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY OF FORMING A NEW GOVERNMENT IN WHICH HE WOULD BE THE PRIME MINISTER. THE GOVERNMENT FRENCH LANGUAGE DAILY LE REPUBLICAIN REPORTED ON MAY 15 THAT THE FORMATION OF CABINET HAS BEEN REARLY COMPLETED AND ADDED THAT PORTFOLIOS WILL BE DIVIDED AS FOLLOWS AMONG THE VARIOUS POLITICAL PARTIES: SOCIO- REPUBLICANS, 12 ; DEMOCRATS , 4; AND REPUBLICANS, 3. THIS REPORT CONFORMS
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CLOSELY TO AN UNOFFICIAL LIST OF NEW CABINET MEMBERS WHICH WE HAVE RECEIVED ALTHOUGH THERE IS STILL SOME DOUBT ABOUT THE EXACT NUMBER OF REPUBLICAN AND DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPANTS. THE DEOMCRATIC PARTY HAS TAKEN THE POSITION THAT IN VIEW OF ITS OFFICIAL REFUSAL TO PARTICIPATE IN THE GOVERNMENT ALL DEMOCRATIC PARTY MEMBERS WHO ACCEPT MINISTRIES WILL BE ASKED TO LEAVE THE PARTY. IT IS OUR

UNDERSTANDING THAT ALL THE DEMOCRATS UNDER CONSIDERATION EXCEPT ONE HAVE ALREADY RESIGNED FROM THE PARTY.

3. A GROUP OF SOLDIERS FROM DISSOLVED UNITS RECENTLY TRANSFERRED TO THE FANK 7 TH DIVISION DEMONSTRATED AND FIRED IN THE AIR IN DOWNTOWN PHNOM PENH ON MAY 14 TO PROTEST A TWO- TO- THREE MONTH DELAY IN PAYMENT OF THEIR SALARIES. EMBASSY OBSERVERS ESTIMATED THAT ABOUT 500 TROOPS WERE INVOLVED IN THE DEMONSTRATION. EXISTING MEMBERS OF THE 7 TH HAVE BEEN RECEIVING THEIR PAY REGULARLY, BUT THESE TRANSFERREES, WHO APPARENTLY CAME FROM THE NOTORIOUSLY UNDISCIPLINED, NOW DISBANDED 22 ND BRIGADE, HAVE NOT. THEY RECEIVED SOME PAY TODAY, AND SEEM TO HAVE LARELY DISBANDED.

GRUNK/ FUNK

4. SIHANOUK, MONIQUE, IENG SARY (REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE INTERIOR), GRUNK FOREIGN MINISTER SARIN CHHAK AND SIHANOUK'S DIRECTOR OF CABINET SISOWATH METHAVI ARRIVED IN ALGIERS MAY 10 AND LEFT THE SAME DAY FOR SENEGAL WHERE THEY STAYED UNTIL THE 13 TH. THEY WENT ON TO GUINEA REPORTEDLY UNTIL MAY 16. IN ALGIERS SIHANOUK REITERATED THAT HIS FORCES DO NOT INTEND TO TAKE PHNOM PENH " PARTICULARLY THIS YEAR" BUT RATHER TO STRENGTHEN POSITIONS AROUND THE CAPITAL AND OTHER TOWNS AND BESIEGE PHNOM PENH. IN SENEGAL, HE TOLD REPORTERS THAT 1974 WOULD SEE TOTAL VICTORY. ACCORDING TO AFP, THE PRINCE SAID IN THE SENEGAL PRESS CONFERENCE THEY HE WAS WILLING TO MAKE PEACE WITH THE UNITED STATES BUT CITED THREE CONDITIONS: AN END TO U. S. AIR OPERATIONS, AN END TO MILITARY AID TO LON NOL, AND WITHDRAWAL OF ALL NON- KHMER MILITARY PERSONNEL. HE RULED OUT NEGOTIATIONS WITH LON NOL.
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5. PEKING RADIO REPORTED THAT PENN NOUTH AND LE DOC THO MET 11 MAY.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 PHNOM PENH 4719

ECONOMIC

6. RICE - PHNOM PENH RICE STOCKS STOOD AT APPROXIMATELY 23,028 M/ T ON MAY 11, INCLUDING 1,608 M/ T TRUCK- CONVOYED FROM KOMPONG SOM MAY 10.

7. AFTER A REASSESSMENT OF VARIOUS DEMAND FACTORS FOR RICE INCLUDING AN INFLUX OF REFUGEES AND INCREASED REQUIREMENTS FOR RICE RELEASED FROM PHNOM PENH TO THE PROVINCES, WE HAVE CONCLUDED THAT PHNOM PENH' S DAILY DISTRIBUTION RATE FOR PLANNING PURPOSES MUST BE INCREASED FROM 450 TO 550 M/ T. FURTHER, UNLESS SIGNIFICANT ADDITIONAL AMOUNTS OF THAI OR BATTAMBANG RICE ARE SECURED IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS, THE REPUBLIC FACES THE STRONG POSSIBILITY OF A RICE CRISIS IN JULY. WE HAVE THEREFORE REQUESTED THAT ADDITIONAL US OR OTHER RICE BE PROVIDED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

8. POL - SUPPLIES OF MOGAS, KEROSENE, INDUSTRIAL DIESEL AND JP-4 ARE NOW IN CRITICAL SUPPLY. THE NEXT CONVOY, DUE ABOUT MAY 17, SHOULD PROVIDE SOME RELIEF AND BRING STOCKS UP TO REASONABLE LEVELS.

MILITARY SITUATION

9. THE TEMPO OF KHMER INSURGENT (KI) ACTIVITY REMAINED AT A GENERALLY LOWER LEVEL FOR THE SECOND WEEK, SUGGESTING THE ENEMY MAY BE RESTING AND REFITTING.
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FANK CLEARING OPERATIONS ON RTE. 1 AND 5 REMAIN STALLED BUT RTE. 4 IS OPEN TO TRAFFIC.

10. THE KI PRESSED FANK TO ABANDON SEVERAL LIGHTLY DEFENDED COMPANY- SIZED POSITIONS ALONG RTE. 26 IN PHNOM PENH' S WESTERN ENVIRONS, BUT A COUNTERATTACK BY FANK IS UNDER WAY.

11. TWO BRIDGES ON THE CAPITAL' S SOUTHERN OUTER DEFENSES WERE DESTROYED AND A GOVERNMENT POSITION ON RTE. 2 SOUTHWEST OF TAKHMAU WAS ABANDONED. FANK J-2 REPORTS INDICATE THAT THESE ATTACKS COULD BE A PRELUDE TO A POSSIBLE HIGH POINT IN ACTIVITY AROUND THE CAPITAL BETWEEN 18-20 MAY. WHILE NO MAJOR GROUND ASSAULTS ARE EXPECTED, SAPPER AND TERRORIST INCIDENTS AGAINST SENSITIVE TARGETS IN THE CITY AND POCHENTONG AIRFIELD ARE POSSIBLE.

12. SOUTHWEST OF THE CAPITAL INSURGENT FORCES RENEWED
ATTACKS AGAINST RTE. 3 POSITIONS NORTH OF TRAM KHAR
ON 15 MAY.

13. NORTHWEST OF PHNOM PENH, A WELL- ENTRENCHED INSUR-
GENT FORCE CONTINUES TO STALL FANK CLEARING OPERATIONS
ON RTE. 5 SOUTH OF KOMPONG CHHNANG. A 10- KM SECTION
OF THE ROAD REMAINS UNDER ENEMY CONTROL.

14. FANK FORCES AT TAKEO MADE SOME PROGRESS,
EXPANDING THE CITY' S DEFENSIVE BELT BY SOME 4 KM.
ENEMY HARASSING ACTIONS CONTINUED IN THE KAMPOT AREA.

15. NO NEW DEVELOPMENTS WERE NOTED ALONG THE MEKONG
RIVER CORRIDOR. ANOTHER FANK POSITION ON RTE. 1,
NORTHWEST OF NEAK OUONG, WAS ABANDONED FOLLOWING
A KI ATTACK WHICH FURTHER ENHANCES THE ENEMY' S
CAPABILITY TO HARASS SHIPPING.
SWANK

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